

Message Text

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ACTION PM-07

INFO OCT-01 AF-10 ARA-16 EA-11 EUR-25 NEA-11 RSC-01 IO-14

ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00

NSC-10 PA-04 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-20 USIA-15 SAM-01 OMB-01

MMS-03 DRC-01 /171 W

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FM AMEMBASSY TANANARIVE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5995

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

AMEMBASSY PORT LOUIS

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

CINCEUR

CINCLANT

CINCPAC

CINCUSNAVEUR

COMIDEASTFOR

C O N F I D E N T I A L TANANARIVE 0172

E. O. 11652: GD

TAGS: MARR, MA, US, UE, IO

SUBJ: COMMENT ON MALAGASY GOVERNMENT PROTEST OVER DIEGO GARCIA
EXPANSION

REFS: A) TANANARIVE 0171; B) TANANARIVE 0154

SUMMAGY: RATHER MILD GOMR PUBLIC PROTEST (TEXT TRANSMITTAD REFTTEL A)

AGAINST DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION PROJECT PROBABLY REFLECTS FELT NEED

NOT TO BE LEFT OFF NON-ALIGNED BANDWAGON THIS ISSUE ENTIRELY. NEI-

THET BRIT EMBASSY NOR WE FEEL GOMR OR PUBLIC REACTION WILL GO MUCH

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BEYOND OFFICIAL STATEMENT, WHICH PROBABLY MAINLY FOR RECORD. HOW-

EVER, OFFICIAL STAND ON DIEGO GARCIA EXPANSION CERTAINLY DOES NOT INCREASE LIKELIHOOD THAT, ONCE MIDDLE EAST SETTLEMENT REACHED, GOMR WILL BE PERSUADED TO REOPEN PORTS TO US NAVY, OR FOR THAT MATTER WILL OPEN THEM TO SOVIETS.

1. REFTTEL B PARA 4, EMBASSY BELIEVES GOMR FELT IT COULD NOT KEEP FROM PROTESTING IN VIEW LEAD TAKEN BY INDIA AND CERTAIN OTHER LITTORAL STATES. (ONE PRESS ACCOUNT MAKES SPECIFIC REFERENCE TO INDIAN INITIATIVE.) FACT NEITHER THIS NOR BRIT EMBASSY NOTIFIED PRIOR TO RELEASE IS IN KEEPING WITH GOMR MFA HABITS. WE INCLINED BELIEVE PROTEST IS ESSENTIALLY FOR RECORD, THOUGH POSSIBLE MALAGASY COUNTERPRESSURES NOT TOTALLY EXCLUDED. FOR INSTANCE, FACT GOMR HAS TAKEN SUCH STAND WILL PROBABLY MEAN IT WOULD FIND REOPENING PORTS TO US NAVY EXTREMELY DIFFICULT EVEN AFTER MIDDLE EAST CRISIS SETTLED, AS IT HAD EARLIER HINTED STRONGLY IT PROBABLY WOULD. WE DOUBT VERY STRONGLY, HOWEVER, SOVIET NAVAL UNITS WILT FIND IT ANY EASIER TO VISIT UNDER SAME SET OF CIRCUMSTANCES.

2. WHILE COMMUNIQUE IS NOT EVEN-HANDED IN DEALING WITH US AND SOVIET PRESENCE IN INDIAN OCEAN, IT IS FAIRER THAN PROTESTS EMANATING FROM MOST LITTORAL STATES. IT SPECIFICALLY AND PUBLICLY PUTS US ACTION IN CONTEXT OF COUNTERING EXPANDING SOVIET NAVAL PRESENCE. IT ALSO CALLS ON BOTH SUPERPOWERS FOR FORBEARANCE IN INDIAN OCEAN. FINALLY, IT ACKNOWLEDGES SUPERPOWER PEACE EFFORTS IN MIDDLE EAST. MEMDENHALL

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